(b) whether he has highlighted complete neglect of Rajghat Samadhi area which houses the Samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi, Father of the Nation;

(c) if so, whether Government have agreed to hand over the 58 acre sprawling Rajghat ground area to his Ministry;

(d) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) what other steps are being taken to maintain the Samadhi as a living memorial?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) It has been decided that except for the main Samadhi and the VVIP route leading to the Samadhi which would continue to be managed/ maintained by the Rajghat Samadhi Committee, the remaining area would be directly maintained by the Govt. with a view to ensuring effective development and improvement of the area.

(d) and (e) Government would take whatever steps are necessary to improve the condition in all its aspect.

Slums an Environmental Hazard

5301. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that in Urban areas slums are on the increase;

(b) whether Government are also aware that Dharavi in Maharashtra is considered to be the Asia's largest slum;

(c) whether Government are convinced that expansion of slum is an environmental hazard, besides being a cause for other problems; and

(d) whether Government propose to evolve a national scheme in this regard for implementation in all the States?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION (SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government of Maharashtra have reported that Dharavi is considered the largest slum in Mumbai. However, no reliable data is available regarding the relative size of slums in Asia.

(c) Yes Sir, among other problems slums pose an environmental hazard too.

(d) The Government already has a scheme known as National Slum Development Programme (NSDP) under which Additional Central Assistance (ACA) is being released to the States / UTs for the development of urban slums. The Scheme is implemented in all States / UTs of the country.

Installation of Statue of Mahatma Gandhi at India Gate

5302. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to install the statue of Mahatma Gandhi near the Canopy at India Gate, New Delhi;

(b) whether any objection have been raised against the installation; and

(c) if so, by whom and what are the reasons given by them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) to (c) A proposal for installation of a statue of Mahatma Gandhi at the India Gate Complex has been under the consideration of the Government. A writ petition has been filed before Delhi High Court by Conservation Society of Delhi against the India Gate Canopy structure being damaged in any manner for installing the statue, on the ground that the Canopy along with the India Gate Complex form part of national heritage. This petition is still pending before the Court for disposal.

News-item "Appropriate land, build on it, get it rgularized"

5303. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMAD KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Appropriate land, build on it, get it regularized" which appeared in the Times of India, dated 21st February, 2000;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that encroachments are, instead of being removed, regularized easily;

(c) if not, the details in this regard; and

(d) what are the plans of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Yes, Sir.